



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

The Theory of Social Revolutions. By BROOKS ADAMS. (New York; Macmillan, 1913. Pp. vii, 240.)

This work while filled with errors and hasty generalizations, possesses the quality of stimulating thought. Mr. Adams' primary contention is one against judicial authority in political matters. He contends that "no court can, because of the nature of its being, effectively check a popular majority acting through a coördinate legislative assembly. . . . The only result of an attempt and failure is to bring courts of justice into odium or contempt, and in any event to make them objects of attack by a dominant social force in order to use them as an instrument. . . . Hence in periods of change, when alone serious clashes between legislatures and courts are likely to occur, as the social equilibrium shifts the legislature almost certainly will reflect the rising, the court the sinking power" (pp. 76, 77).

Mr. Adams regards the courts as properly a group of passionless persons administering a body of abstract principles (pp. 76, 81), and insists that our system has made the courts largely bodies for the registration in law of the dominant economic and social interests of the community (pp. 89-131). "In fine," he says, "whenever pressure has reached a given intensity, on one pretext or another, courts have enforced or dispensed with constitutional limitations with quite as much facility as have legislatures, and for the same reasons." In this view the author is to a large extent right, as he is also in the position that courts must in the long run fail whenever they seek to interpose constitutional barriers against legislation approved by the better judgment of the community (p. 111).

The author assumes that "those who, at any given time, are the strongest in any civilization, will be those who are at once the ruling class, those who own most property, and those who have most influence on legislation" (p. 132). Capitalism, in his view, has been this dominant force in the community, and now as it is losing its power, seeks to entrench itself behind political courts. Mr. Adams thinks that such a policy may prove disadvantageous to capital, in that with a change of power, the political court will be employed as an instrument against capital itself. This contention he seeks to illustrate by a lengthy discussion of political tribunals during the French revolution.

Mr. Adams is probably correct in his contentions that our courts have too much political power and that such power will tend to be employed in the manner approved by the dominant sentiment of the community